

GOODWIN'S WEEKLY

SIXTEENTH YEAR

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

BY GOODWIN'S WEEKLY PUBLISHING CO., INC.

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Including postage in the United States, Canada and Mexico \$2.00 per year, \$1.25 for six months. Subscriptions to all foreign countries, within the Postal Union, \$3.50 per year.

Single copies, 5 cents.

Payment should be made by Check, Money Order or Registered Letter, payable to Goodwin's Weekly.

Address all communications to Goodwin's Weekly.

Entered at the Postoffice at Salt Lake City, Utah, U. S. A., as second-class matter.

Phone Wasatch 5409.

311-12-13 Ness Bldg.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

IN AN OBSERVATION PLANE

IT is disappointing to hear rumors that the Democratic state administration is being influenced by politics in the matter of road construction. It is reported as an actual fact that Democratic politicians all over the state are trying to use the road fund as a means of promoting their political fortunes and of securing party advantage.

For the first time in its history the state has millions of dollars for good roads. And now, as the work is about to begin, selfish interests are at work to fritter away the millions on temporary roads. When the people unanimously supported the appropriation of millions, to which the federal government was to add other millions, they had just one object, or rather one alluring vision in mind—a system of permanent roads along the main highways of the state. They had a vision of hard-surfaced roads which should serve the thickly settled portions of the state and open up domains of wealth in the thinly populated districts, that is to say in regions which need only good roads to develop their resources. They believed that a co-ordinated system would link the state together in such fashion as to bring remote points and market towns in touch with one another by rapid means of communication and transport.

Those who have appropriations in their control should not forget the character of the funds. They are obtained by means of bonds. This is a highly significant fact because it indicates an obvious duty. We are under obligations to provide roads for those who must pay off the bonds at maturity; otherwise we shall be making our children pay for something they have not. If the road commissioners set before themselves a high ideal they will utterly disregard the demands of selfish interests and provide concrete or equally good hard-surfaced roads for the present and necessarily for the future. If they squander the funds on dirt roads they will satisfy only the selfish few.

Moreover, if the funds are expended on temporary roads it will be a long time before the state again will be able to provide funds for permanent roads. The result will be that

Utah will be far behind the other states east and west.

Temporary roads—whether of dirt or of some shallow macadam—simply pile up future expense. It has been said—and probably with a fair degree of accuracy—that temporary roads will cost four times as much as permanent roads to keep in repair.

The difference in initial costs is not so great as many imagine. Take, for example, the two roads that were built some years ago on the Ogden highway. The Utah Power and Light constructed a macadam road from the Warm Springs to the Davis county line. The state constructed a concrete road north from the line. The macadam road cost \$8,500 a mile and had to be repaired the first year. The concrete road cost \$10,000 a mile. It is true that state labor was used on the concrete road, but even if free labor had been employed the cost per mile would have been increased by only \$2,000 or \$3,000, for it was necessary to feed the state labor well. The cost per man per day was not less than a dollar.

Some repairs, of course, have been necessary on the concrete road, but it bids fair to last for many more years, whereas the other road, which was almost impassable for a long time, has been replaced by a splendid hard-surfaced road.

It is our duty to build for the future as well as for the present. We owe a duty not only to ourselves but to those who must sacrifice to liquidate the loan we have fastened upon them.

THE proposal of advanced reformers in Lynn, Mass., to establish free street car service has attracted much comment. A philosophical supporter argues that a street car line is nothing more or less than a road or walk. Some of them we have ridden on are not as good as a walk, but that is another story. He concludes that there is no more reason to charge for street car riding than there is for sidewalk walking. The purpose of both operations is to get from here to there. The intrinsic value of "there" is not a bit more intrinsic than the value of "here." But perhaps I am missing his line of thought somewhat. He is trying to prove that rides on street cars should be as

free as the air we breathe, if not as enjoyable.

A true philosopher would ask, "Why is air free" when street car rides must be paid for at the rate of five-going-on-ten-cents per ride? Air is free because there is so much of it, and because it does not have to be conveyed from here to there by street cars. If it were necessary to cart the air to our lungs on steel rails it might easily be worth five cents for a short breath and seven cents for a deep inhalation. We know by experience that Salt Lake air is rather costly. On several occasions last winter a breath of fresh air could not be obtained downtown and one had to take a six-cents street car ride to regions where the ozone was pure and undeffled.

The day may come, of course, when riding will be as free as walking, but when that elysian epoch arrives we probably shall be getting our water, gas and electricity free.

And then, what will the advanced reformers demand? Perhaps free automobiles.

A CORRESPONDENT writes to inquire the significance of the word "it" in the following sentence appearing on a Victory loan poster:

"If America at this juncture should fail the world, what would become of it?"

Does the "it" refer to world or America, he asks to know.

To neither. It refers to the juncture. The genius who prepared the poster evidently was concerned more about the juncture than about either America or the world and, therefore, he asked all America and the world to tell him what would become of the juncture. Our own opinion is that if

America failed the world there wouldn't be any juncture.

The ex-crown prince of Germany is broke and is offering to sell for \$40,000 the fur coat the czar gave him. This must be a Hun plot to raise the price of second-hand goods.

There is a movement to embody daylight saving in the League of Nations treaty. On't much daylight has been wasted on it thus far.

The Shortt brothers plan to fly from Ireland to New Foundland without falling short.

Going from Archangel to Petrograd is like going from heaven to Hoboken and even beyond.

The Germans are building and concealing armored cars, it is reported. That's the safest way.

The Italians love peace, but they love certain sections of Jugo Slavia more.

The Hungarian Reds are a little yellow.

Some day the world will be so peaceful that we shall be able to hear the fall of a Spanish cabinet again.

Peace work is too slow and costs too much.

The women of the Sikhs occupy a very high place in the society of the race. Equality of sex is recognized. When the Sikhs took their sword as their profession many of the women made themselves distinguished for their valor, courage, and statesmanship.

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